244 (*b*) *buah entikak*: pumpkin;
262 (*c*) *buah empusut*: luffa sp.;
(*d*) *buah labu*: gourd.

All of these are ready to eat before the *padi* has ripened, for the Iban delight in the fruits of these plants when they are still immature; and again, cucumber and pumpkin leaves are cooked as vegetables as soon as they have formed. In good years there is often a glut. Around the edges of the farm clearing, and in the 243 immediate vicinity of the hut (*langkau*) which stands at its centre, various other 245 plants are grown, such as: cassava (*empasa*), maize (*lingkau*), *changkok* (Sauropus albicans), and pineapples (*buah nanas*).

*The Weeding of the Farm*

x 243 118. One of the greatest difficulties with which a shifting cultivator has to cope is weed growth. Under certain circumstances it may even seriously interfere with affairs before the burn. This happens if the period between the felling and the firing is too protracted, in which event weed growth and general regeneration choke the fallen timber and prevent a good blaze. This re-growth which springs up before the burn is termed *pelangus*, and occasionally it becomes so thick that part of a farm has to be abandoned. I was able to observe a striking case of this at Rumah Nyala in 1949. Majau, a young and inexperienced farmer who had but recently set up his own *bilek* family, felled about 3 acres of secondary jungle (*daman*) early in May, hoping, he said, for an early burn. Because of bad weather however, he did not succeed in firing his farm until 14th September, by which time it was so densely covered with *pelangus* that about half of it did not catch at all, and of the remaining 1½ acres only those parts which he had slashed a second time burnt well. The outcome was an exceedingly poor crop, for there was healthy *padi* on not much more than a single acre.

119. Within a few weeks of the burn the weeds begin to reappear. Their prevalence and their nature depend very largely on the type of land which is being farmed. After the felling of primary jungle, for example, weed growth is slight, but after two consecutive firings of secondary jungle (i.e. a *krukoh daman* farm), weeds are usually prolific with *lalang* (Imperata sp.) and other virtually ineradicable grasses, ferns and shrubs having invaded the land. These factors will be discussed in the section on land usage.

120. Weeding begins, in a desultory way, even before sowing is completed. On a number of occasions at *belaboh padi pun* rituals, I observed the women whose farm it was devote their spare time to weeding, leaving the business of 188 sowing to their guests from other *bilek* families. Within a day or two of the 184 completion of sowing the rite of *bebasu arang* ('washing the charcoal') takes place. This represents the formal termination of the many prohibitions (*pemali*)[1] which are in force during the period of planting. Weeding is then ready to begin, but its commencement is not marked by any kind of ritual.

x 243 121. Of all the labour stages in the agricultufal cycle weeding is the most 461 onerous and irksome. It has none of the excitement of felling, and lacks the conviviality and the heightened emotion associated with the many rituals of sowing. Weeding is uninviting, unremitting work calling for diligence and

[1] For example, during the sowing period it is forbidden to pluck the eyebrows or eyelashes (*pemali mantun bulu mata*), as this is symbolical of the young *padi* shoots being plucked out by birds. Again, there must be no forging, etc. of iron (*pemali ngamboh*) for this causes the young padi to become 'feverish' (*angat*) and sickly. In all there are about a score of these *pemali*.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

years, when a surplus of *padi* has been gained, it is exchanged for gongs, which are then available in years of shortage. Each season, some families succeed in producing a surplus, while others find themselves with a deficit; and so, year by year in an area like the Baleh, scores of different families exchange gongs for *padi*, or *padi* for gongs. Jars (*tajau*), though to a much lesser extent, are used in the same way. Again, money—obtained from the marketing of jungle produce—is often used to purchase *padi*; and of recent years, cash crops—particularly rubber—have become increasingly important.

248. It frequently happens, however that a family is not prepared to part with any of its gongs or other property. In these circumstances recourse is had to the traditional scarcity food of the Iban: sago. Most *bilek* families possess small plantations of sago palms, specially planted as a scarcity crop (Plate 5), for no Iban relishes *mulong* (as prepared sago is called), and it is only eaten under duress when *padi* cannot be easily procured. When planted sago is not available, the men set off to scour the jungle for the wild palms, from which the nomadic tribes of Borneo—such as the Punans—habitually obtain the sago which is the main item of their diet.

*Rubber as a Cash Crop, and its Relation to Padi Cultivation*

249. We have so far been discussing the traditional ways of coping with a *padi* shortage, but to-day, in many parts of the Baleh, the introduction of rubber as a cash crop has drastically changed the situation. As far as I have been able to determine, rubber was first introduced into the Kapit District in 1907 when a prison gang planted some 200 young trees.[1] By 1913, both rubber and cassava were being grown by Iban communities living in the vicinity of Kapit.[2] During the years of disaffection, from 1914-1919, it is probable that little or no rubber was planted in the Baleh region itself, but soon after the Iban were permitted to re-occupy the river, in 1922, planting was resumed. At Rumah Nyala in the Sungai Sut, the first trees to be planted date from about 1924. Some years after this a strange series of events occurred. The story spread, among the Iban, that rubber trees had a strongly deleterious effect on their *padi*; the spirit of the rubber trees (*antu kubal*), so it was said, was able to attack and drive away the *padi* spirits (*antu padi*). Many Iban came to believe this extraordinary tale (which had sprung from a dream), and so deeply that they were persuaded to cut down the rubber trees they had planted. To-day they bewail their stupidity, but because of it, many Iban families in the Baleh region are now without productive rubber plantations.[3]

250. At Rumah Nyala, in 1950, all but four of the twenty-five *bilek* families possessed small rubber plantations. Rubber is prepared for the market in small sheets (*kepin*), and it is convenient therefore, to discuss *bilek* family plantations in terms of the number of sheets which they are capable of yielding when being fully worked. Measurement of some 50 typical *kepin* showed an average weight per sheet of 1·7 katis (1 kati equals 1 1/3rd lbs.). The family holdings of Rumah Nyala are summarized in Table 23.

[1] "Sarawak Gazette," 1908, p. 13.
[2] "Sarawak Gazette," 1913, p. 118.
[3] This story appears to have had a wide circulation in Sarawak, for it was also encountered by Dr. W. R. Geddes among the Land Dayaks of the First Division.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

# NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES

*Frontispiece.* A view of the *padi* farm of the *bilek* family of Kubu, Rumah Nyala, Sungai Sut, in 1950. This farm was one of a series that extended along the crest of a 800ft.—900ft. ridge overlooking the headwaters of the Sungai Nyunggau and the main valley of the Baleh river. (See Sketch Maps 1 and 3). Cleared from virgin jungle in 1949, the land is being cultivated for the second year in succession. In the foreground, young *padi* and cassava plants are springing up. Beyond the farm hut (on the open platform of which are Kubu's wife and grandson), Kubu's farm extends towards that of his neighbour, Kamba (the augur of Rumah Nyala), whose farm hut can also be discerned. Virgin jungle (*kampong*) is still standing on the spur in the right background, while to the left are slopes thickly covered with young secondary growth (*dijap kampong*). Photograph taken on 23rd December, 1950, by Mr. B. E. Smythies.

1. Iban farm clearings in Sungai Saban, Ulu Sut, Kapit District, Third Division, Sarawak. Photograph taken on 3rd September, 1949, just before the firing of the farms. In the background is Mt. Goram (3,073 ft.).

2. A farm clearing (*umai*) in virgin jungle (*kampong*) in the Upper Batang Baleh, Kapit District. Photograph taken on 27th February, 1949, when the farm was covered with a heavy crop of *padi*. In the lower right hand corner is part of the roof of the farm house (*dampa*) from which the land was worked. Note tree stumps with buttress roots.

3. Dampa Adin, one of the subsidiary farm houses of Rumah Nyala, Sungai Sut, Kapit District. On 20th February, 1951, when this photograph was taken Dampa Adin housed 12 *bilek* families. The woman on the open platform (*tanju*) is tending *padi* that is being sunned prior to pounding.

4. The pattern of Iban agriculture: from the long-house in the valley the surrounding hills have been brought into cultivation. (For this photograph taken in Sungai Bangkit, Kapit District, I am indebted to Mr. B. E. Smythies).

5. An Iban farm (*umai*) in Sungai Tiau, Ulu Mujong, Kapit District. Photograph taken on 8th December, 1949, when the land was covered with young *padi*. To the left is a grove of sago palms, grown as a scarcity crop. In the valley, a watch-house (*langkau umai*) is in course of construction.

6. Dampa Along, one the subsidiary farm houses of Rumah Nyala, Sungai Sut, Kapit District. This *dampa*, occupied by three *bilek* families, was still in course of construction when this photograph was taken on 24th September, 1949, and only the central family had finished building the open platform (*tanju*) of its apartment. The felled secondary jungle (*damun*) shown in the background had been fired two days previously, but the burn was a very poor one.

7. Felling in virgin jungle (*kampong*). The axe-man is standing on a scaffolding (*tundan*) which lifts him above the buttress roots of the tree. Photograph taken on 1st August, 1949; Sungai Sut, Kapit District.

8. After the felling: secondary jungle (*damun*) drying in the sun. Photograph taken on 28th July, 1949, Sungai Sut, Kapit District.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

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*Plate* 5. An Iban *padi* farm bordered by a grove of sago palms, Sungai Tiau Kapit District.

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*Plate* 6. An Iban farm house (*dampa*) with secondary jungle (*damun*) in the background.

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6



husk, or padi state, it may be kept for years without injury, and is in this respect supposed to be equal to the production of India or America. 251

Besides the farms above described, the Dyaks have small gardens, usually the property of women, in which they plant vegetables of different kinds, principally the 'trong,' brenjal of the East, and egg-plant of Europe, sugar-cane, plantains, yams, sweet potatoes, chilies, &c. A few plants of tobacco are generally found in their farms, the leaves of which they prepare by drying for their own use. Sisawi, a kind of mustard, and a species of millet, are also planted amongst the padi in small quantities. The sugar-cane, which grows very freely, is only esteemed for its saccharine juice, which they extract like the Malays, by chewing. Of the plantains they have several fine varieties; that most esteemed is the 'pisang amas,' or golden plantain; its fruit is small and not angular, the bunch is, however, uncommonly large—it is of a rich golden yellow colour, and much finer flavour than most of the other kinds. The 'pisang merah,' or red plantain, called 'pisang udang,' or prawn plantain, by the Malays, and 'pisang baddat,' are the next in esteem, and resemble each other, except in colour, which in the former is red, in the latter yellow, with green ends; many others are very fine, but as the varieties are so numerous it is unnecessary to particularize them: the 'pisang tandok,' or horn plantain, bears fruit of from twelve to eighteen inches in length, and is a well- 244 [249] 245

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6



245 flavoured variety. Pine-apples are seldom cultivated by the Dyaks, though they are found apparently in a wild state about most of their villages; in such situations the fruit is small and of little flavour, and it is remarkable that the Dyaks, who delight in the cultivated ones from the Chinese gardens at Sarawak, should take no care of their own.

423 The ancestors of the Dyaks having for many cen-
245 turies occupied the countries these people now inhabit, fruit trees are scattered in abundance all over its surface, particularly near the banks of rivers, and all jungles abound with them. The most esteemed kinds surround their villages, and these, with other in easily accessible places, are individual property; but those of the jungles are not owned, and the fruit of them generally becomes the property of the squirrels, monkeys, and birds, which frequent the forests containing them, unless the destructive Malay should see them, who, ever thoughtless of the future, immediately cuts down with his hatchet a tree which has taken many years to attain its fruiting state, and for the purpose of gathering a few for himself, destroys what might at some future time be of service to the Dyaks or others, who might, for the purposes of mining or agriculture, be compelled to reside in the vicinity.

224 As the woods of the country of the sea-Dyaks abound in pigs and deer, and the tribes are not prevented by any superstitious prejudice from eating the flesh of either of these animals, various contrivances are in use for their

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6



427 plates. As a gamecock or two plates cost about a quarter of a dollar, it is dearer to pay for the use of land with money. Land disputes are very common among Dyaks. 691 As they often leave a particular district, and then return again after many years, it is not surprising that complications arise.

423 Fruit-trees are owned by the people who plant them. The different families in a Dyak house plant fruit-trees 245 near their part of the house. When they leave the spot and build a new habitation elsewhere, they each still claim ownership of the trees they planted. The rule with regard to fruit-trees is that anyone may take the ripe fruit that has fallen, but only the owner or someone deputed by him may climb the tree. Banting Hill, where I lived for some years, was covered with fruit-trees (*durian*), and at night during the fruit season crowds of men and boys would watch for the falling of the ripe fruit. They would each have a torch made of the bark of some tree, and they would sit and wait with the torch smouldering by their side. As soon as a ripe *durian* fruit was heard to fall, they would wave their torches in the air to make them flare up into a flame, and they would rush to the spot, and the person who found the fruit would take possession of it.

567 Slavery exists among the Dyaks, but not to any great extent. There are two classes of slaves—captives in war, and slaves for debt.

The Sea Dyaks when on the warpath spare neither man, women, nor children, but it occasionally happens that when they are able to do so, they carry little children back with them as captives. There are not many slaves to be met with among the Sea Dyaks, and these do not seem to be hardly treated. The slaves are not distinguishable